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Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/103, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session. It provides an overview of disasters associated with natural hazards during the reporting period and analyses a number of thematic issues, with a particular focus on risk management and interoperability. The report provides an overview of current efforts and progress made in strengthening international cooperation in this regard and concludes with recommendations for further improvements.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/103, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters. It covers the calendar year 2013.

II. The year in review

A. Disaster data for 2013

2. For 2013, the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters registered 334 natural disasters that killed an estimated 22,600 people, affected 97 million people and caused over $118 billion in economic damages, marking the fourth consecutive year in which annual economic losses exceeded $100 billion. Asia was the most affected region, with almost half (160) of all disasters occurring in the world and 88 per cent of all deaths.

3. In 2013, major protracted and recurrent crises continued to affect vulnerable countries and regions, such as the Sahel and the Philippines. Over the past decade, the Sahel has experienced multiple severe food and nutrition crises, which recur every three to five years and are likely to become more frequent owing to climate change and population growth, leaving little time for recovery between crises. The required cost of the humanitarian response to these crises has increased dramatically, from $196 million in 2005 to $2.2 billion in 2014. Typhoon Haiyan and the Bohol earthquake led to the fifth inter-agency appeal/response plan in the Philippines related to a major disaster in the past decade. Such trajectories are expected to worsen in the future, underscoring the need to break the vicious cycle of protracted and recurrent crises by managing disaster risks and addressing their root causes.

B. Overview of disasters associated with natural hazards

4. The most devastating disaster during the reporting period was Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda), which made landfall in the Philippines on 8 November and affected over 14 million people, including 5.4 million children. National authorities recorded 6,300 deaths and 1,061 people missing. About 4 million people were displaced and over 1 million homes were damaged, nearly half of them destroyed. Owing to good early warning systems, major evacuations were carried out and almost 162,000 families were relocated to evacuation centres before Haiyan made landfall. A United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team was deployed before the typhoon made landfall to support the Government response. Given the magnitude of the destruction, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee declared a level 3 emergency on 12 November to activate maximum system-wide response. The level 3 was officially deactivated three months later, on 14 February 2014.

5. Haiyan came on the heels of a 7.2 magnitude earthquake that hit the nearby island province of Bohol on 15 October, killing over 220 and damaging or destroying the homes of more than 367,700 people. Although Haiyan did not cause

significant damage in Bohol, it affected the response capacity of partners, since many Government and international humanitarian organizations shifted resources from Bohol to the typhoon-affected areas.

6. In Pakistan, flooding during the 2013 monsoon season affected fewer people than in previous years, but still impacted 1.5 million persons (compared with 18 million in 2010, 5 million in 2011 and 4.8 million in 2012). Major earthquakes also struck Balochistan in March and September, together affecting an estimated 215,000 people and killing more than 400.

7. In India, Cyclone Phailin struck the states of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh in October. Phailin was the second-strongest tropical cyclone ever to make landfall in the country (after the 1999 Odisha cyclone). Investments in early warning systems, combined with the efficient evacuation of exposed communities led to a significantly lower death toll (47) than the nearly 9,900 deaths in 1999.

8. In the Sahel region, 11.3 million people remained food insecure (compared with 18 million in 2012), while 5 million children were threatened by malnutrition. Despite cereal production surpluses, the most vulnerable continued to feel the impact of the 2012 food and nutrition crisis. The combined effects of an increase in food prices, limited trade and access to markets owing to insecurity and high levels of poverty, and debt led to the selling of assets and low purchasing power among the most vulnerable. In addition, close to half a million people across the region were affected by floods. The extent of flooding and damage was, however, significantly lower than the impact of high rains in 2012, when more than 1 million people in the region were affected.

9. In Southern Africa, the largest disaster event in 2013 was the flooding in Mozambique, which resulted in over 100 deaths and affected 250,000 people. In Madagascar, Tropical Cyclone Haruna caused 26 deaths and affected over 42,000 people. Across the rest of the region, floods affected an additional 268,000 people, 172,000 of whom were in Malawi. Following the heavy rainy season, drought-like conditions impacted Angola, Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Erratic weather, locust invasions and recurrent armyworm outbreaks were major factors affecting crops across the region and led to one of the worst food insecurity situations in years, affecting an estimated 12.4 million people. Malnutrition rates continued to be extremely high in a number of countries, with nearly half of all children suffering from chronic malnutrition in Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique.

10. In Eastern Africa, heavy rain and flooding killed at least 170 people and displaced 225,000, mainly in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda. In Somalia, a tropical cyclone and subsequent flash floods in November resulted in the death of some 80 people and the loss of 80 per cent of livestock in Puntland. In the Sudan, the worst flooding in 25 years affected over 400,000 people in August, while in South Sudan seasonal floods affected nearly 350,000 people.

11. In Mexico, a record amount of rainfall and the simultaneous impact of hurricanes Ingrid and Manuel resulted in over 150 deaths and over 886,000 people in need of emergency relief in September. Agriculture and livelihoods were severely hit and an estimated 534,000 hectares were damaged. Altogether, the 2013 hurricane season caused an estimated $7.5 billion in economic losses in the country.

C. Funding trends related to natural disasters

12. Global humanitarian funding reported to the Financial Tracking Service reached $14.3 billion in 2013. Of this, $2.1 billion or 15 per cent was reported for natural disasters — a nearly fivefold increase from the $407 million received in 2012. The sharp increase was due to the large amount of funding for Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines ($463 million or 59 per cent of the requested $781 million)[1] and the Sahel food and nutrition crisis ($1.1 billion or 63 per cent of the requested $1.7 billion).

13. The Central Emergency Response Fund disbursed $482 million in 2013, of which $80.5 million was for response to natural disasters. This included $49.3 million for response to floods and hurricanes, $19.7 million for drought, $6.5 million for locust infestations and $5 million for earthquakes. The five largest recipient countries for disasters were the Philippines ($30.3 million), Malawi ($8 million), Nigeria ($6.4 million), Mozambique ($5.8 million) and the Sudan ($5.5 million).

III. Reducing vulnerability and managing risk

A. Urgency of the issue: rising needs and risks and recurrent problems

14. Over the past decade, the number and scale of humanitarian crises have skyrocketed. Funding requirements have increased 430 per cent and the number of people in need has doubled. The humanitarian organizations that are responding to emergencies are already overstretched and the costs of response and the number of people in need are only expected to rise. Meanwhile, the duration of humanitarian response has extended. Traditionally, emergency assistance was seen as a short-term lifesaving intervention to support people affected by immediate shocks such as disasters. Today, protracted or recurrent crises have become the norm. In many cases, development programmes are disrupted by shocks, while humanitarian organizations are increasingly compelled to respond over multiple years or repeatedly, often with no clear end in sight. Humanitarian actors are increasingly being asked to do more with greater costs and fewer resources.

15. The landscape of disaster risk is rapidly changing and becoming ever more dynamic. A convergence of global trends is increasing the risk of major crises, while also expanding their scope and complexity. Evidence shows that challenges such as rapid population growth and unplanned urbanization, poverty and inequality, gender inequality, human rights violations, climate change and environmental degradation, and water and resource scarcity are already contributing to increased vulnerability and needs. For instance, it is estimated that 1.2 billion people remained without electricity in 2013 and that 47 per cent of the world's population will be living in areas of high water stress by 2030. By 2050, 6.3 billion people (out of a projected total population of 9.3 billion) will live in urban areas, while the global demand for food is expected to increase by 70 per cent. The compound effect of these trends will be a major factor amplifying the risk and complexity of humanitarian crises in

[1] Source: Financial Tracking Service as at 23 July 2014.

the future and has the potential to further overwhelm the capacity of the international humanitarian system to respond if left unaddressed.

16. The intensity and frequency of disasters have also eroded the ability of vulnerable people to cope with shocks, making crises more intractable, protracted and recurrent. Disasters undermine and set back sustainable development and pathways to economic growth. Thus, major disasters and the cumulative impact of smaller, "silent" disasters are not exclusively a humanitarian issue. Disaster-related economic losses are already high in fast-growing middle-income countries owing to increasingly exposed economic and industrial assets. At the same time, impacts are particularly devastating in smaller and lower-income countries that are often most vulnerable to disasters. Multiple and frequent shocks, including small-scale disasters that do not usually receive news coverage and are traditionally underfunded, exacerbate extreme poverty, curtail recovery and may lock communities in a vicious cycle of increasing vulnerability and recurrent disasters. The impacts of this are particularly severe among the most vulnerable people, such as poor women, who often have less mobility, access to resources and overall resilience to shocks.

17. This trajectory is unsustainable and places the international humanitarian system at a crossroads. Business as usual based solely on response is no longer an option. It is clear that humanitarian action alone cannot address the rising number, scale and complexity of crises. To reverse the trend and to alleviate suffering, it is necessary to further bolster prevention and preparedness strategies and community resilience.

18. Humanitarian crises are often predictable and preventable. Rains and floods are usually seasonal; food and nutrition crises can often be anticipated months ahead of time; and hurricanes and storms can be forecasted in advance. Even when crises cannot be prevented altogether, there are measures to reduce the risk of hazards turning into disasters and to mitigate their impact when they occur. This requires stronger partnerships involving development and humanitarian actors, Governments and local responders. Humanitarian and development organizations must support Governments to strengthen their capacity to better anticipate extreme weather events, address the underlying causes of disaster risk, and reduce and manage residual risks. This involves strengthened preparedness, enhanced response capacity, effective early warning and early action mechanisms, and empowering communities to build their resilience to risks. The use of science, technology and innovation plays a crucial role in these efforts. Utilizing the growing prominence and role of new actors who contribute to the management of risks and the reduction of vulnerabilities will also be essential.

19. The complex combination of recurrent disasters and global challenges and their catastrophic potential makes managing the risk of humanitarian crises more urgent than ever before. A shift that galvanizes the joint responsibility of Governments and humanitarian and development actors for managing risks is required. As the international community is preparing a new post-2015 sustainable development framework and a successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action, to be followed in 2016 by the first World Humanitarian Summit, this is a critical juncture to shape the international system and embed risk management in humanitarian action and development assistance across institutional and sectoral divides. This opportunity cannot be missed.

B. Understanding and overcoming the structural, political and attitudinal barriers to risk management

20. Much of the above is not new. It has been discussed and debated by various actors for years. There have been many initiatives that have sought to manage the risk of humanitarian crises, but they have not been systematic and have not led to a substantial, permanent paradigm shift. Despite ample economic evidence and recurring large-scale crises with untold suffering, little has changed in the way the international system addresses the risks of humanitarian crises. Recent reports call for a system-wide shift from being "crisis fighters" to proactive and systematic risk managers who build resilience and protect hard-won development gains.[2]

21. While there are a number of barriers to adopting and implementing a better risk management model, the 2014 policy report issued by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs entitled *Saving Lives Today and Tomorrow: Managing the Risk of Humanitarian Crises* has identified the following key steps required for a radical shift in approach: (a) ensure that risk information translates into action; (b) overcome the divide between humanitarian and development action and programming; (c) strengthen leadership on risk management; and (d) ensure funding for risk management.

Translation of risk information into action

22. Risk information is often available, but it does not always translate into action. For instance, despite timely early warning, 258,000 people died as a result of famine and food insecurity in Somalia between October 2010 and April 2012. Over recent years, the humanitarian sector has invested significant resources in information collection and analysis, resulting in access to an unprecedented amount of data. Nevertheless, the way risk information is communicated and shared requires considerable improvement. For example, while early warning systems have been improved in many places, more needs to be done to ensure that local actors and communities participate in planning and decision-making and can take appropriate action in response to the warning. Without such "last mile connectivity", any early warning system is incomplete.

23. Humanitarian organizations alone do not always have sufficient capacity to analyse and take decisions on the basis of risk information in a way that leads to action. To improve this, greater coordination and joint planning and analysis are needed, along with strong lines of communication and partnerships with local governments and organizations. Risk analysis tools can help this process by developing a shared understanding of risk so that all actors can target their resources in a coordinated and effective manner. Currently being piloted, the Index for Risk Management is a joint initiative of Inter-Agency Standing Committee agencies and the European Commission Joint Research Centre to develop the first global,

[2] See *Saving Lives Today and Tomorrow: Managing the Risk of Humanitarian Crises* (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), *World Development Report 2014: Risk and Opportunity — Managing Risk for Development* (World Bank), *Dare to prepare: taking risk seriously* (Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Overseas Development Institute), *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2013: From Shared Risk to Shared Value: The Business Case for Disaster Risk Reduction* (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction) and *Managing Famine Risk: Linking Early Warning to Early Action* (Chatham House).

objective and transparent tool for understanding the risk of humanitarian crises. The index can be used to identify and prioritize the people and places most likely to experience humanitarian crises; support decisions about ways to reduce the risks they face; and anticipate, mitigate and prepare for possible crises. To ensure this, decision-making processes must be effective enough to enable prompt decisions for action with confidence in the evidence base. If decisions on investments in sustainable development, capacity-building, preparedness and early action are not based on risk analysis, decision-makers at the international, national and local levels are destined to repeat the patterns of the past.

Divide between humanitarian and development action and programming

24. The divide between humanitarian and development action and programming has been recognized as a barrier to the effective management of risks. This divide creates a gap between short-term humanitarian action and longer-term development programmes, limiting medium-term activities such as preparedness, safety nets and livelihoods support that are needed to mitigate crises and support recovery. While efforts have been made to bridge this gap, major challenges persist. Although many organizations and Governments already implement programmes that address both immediate and longer-term needs, planning cycles, funding streams and programmatic approaches are still not always aligned. This can be the case even within dual-mandated organizations where emergency and development departments are frequently separate, with limited links between their strategies and programmes. To remedy this, humanitarian and development actors need to agree on a common understanding of the underlying risks, clarify and divide roles and responsibilities according to respective expertise, and set joint objectives.

25. One step in the right direction is the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, which helps to strengthen coherent and coordinated United Nations system engagement in supporting Member States to accelerate progress in disaster risk reduction. It provides the framework for the United Nations system to extend a risk-based approach to its humanitarian and development programmes and to enhance preparedness for effective support to national- and community-level response and recovery efforts. Over and above this positive development, humanitarian and development actors need to redouble their efforts to ensure a more comprehensive, coherent, systematic and people-centred approach to managing risks.

26. The shift from response to prevention is fundamentally a political challenge and real change will happen only if Governments actively take the lead to reform the current institutional architecture within their own countries. For example, the World Bank's *World Development Report 2014: Risk and Opportunity — Managing Risk for Development* recommends setting up national risk boards, an institutional reform already in place in Singapore and under consideration in Jamaica, Morocco and Rwanda. Such boards would help to manage risk proactively at every level, aligning with and supporting broader development objectives.

27. At the global level, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), together with Political Champions for Disaster Resilience, are exploring how to create new incentives for institutional change and how to break down silos between development and humanitarian actors and align their work. Other initiatives are also being piloted to

help to overcome barriers to more coherent and integrated risk management. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and UNDP (on behalf of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the United Nations Development Group) are investigating practical ways to support strategic planning to align humanitarian and development frameworks, such as strategic response plans, United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and longer-term national frameworks. For example, the 2014-2016 regional Sahel appeal addresses both acute and chronic vulnerabilities and seeks to build national and regional capacity, increase dialogue with communities and ensure a stronger sense of partnership with development and Government actors. The Common Framework for Preparedness developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction also supports the development of preparedness capacity in a more coherent manner. It involves a systematic country-level approach that assesses both need and capacity and uses that assessment to jointly develop and implement programmes and plans to strengthen preparedness.

Leadership on risk management

28. Efforts to shift to a risk management approach will not succeed without strong leadership from affected Governments, donors and humanitarian and development organizations. Strong advocacy messages and decision-making at the institutional level and detailed operational plans for field implementation are required for risk management to be successfully embedded in the humanitarian and development systems. Resident and humanitarian coordinators can play a catalytic role in supporting Government leadership and providing coordination, in particular for United Nations entities, by facilitating the integration of disaster preparedness and risk management into United Nations development partnerships and frameworks. This may require additional resources and support to the resident and humanitarian coordinators and their offices to build the necessary capacity to exert transformational leadership across organizations and overcome institutional obstacles.

29. The Common Framework for Preparedness can help resident and humanitarian coordinators and country teams by supporting the deployment of advisers to provide risk management and capacity development expertise. The Common Framework recognizes that international inter-agency collaboration should support the lead role of national and local governments in preparedness as part of broader disaster risk management, which should be integrated into relevant national legal frameworks and institutions in order to build sustainable capacity. Continuing commitment by the leadership of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction to the Common Framework and its implementation at the country level, as part of humanitarian and development planning and implementation, will be critical.

30. To ensure that the management of the risks of humanitarian crises is given sufficient political priority by Governments and organizations, the current institutional framework and operational culture must be made fit for purpose. A better understanding of the incentives that can best catalyse the necessary shift in the business model of international and national actors is required. This may involve appropriate risk-taking and approaching emerging risks as timely opportunities for cost-efficient risk-informed sustainable development. The proactivity required for risk management should be politically rewarded. Averting a full-blown crisis,

including on the basis of early warning information, should be seen as a success and be properly recognized, recorded and rewarded. In this regard, effective triggers for appropriate action and "no regrets" approaches — interventions that deliver positive net returns whether or not the risk event eventually materializes, such as building the capacity of national and local responders through training and emergency simulation exercises — should be further pursued.

Funding for risk management

31. Funding is a critical enabler for a shift towards a more anticipatory approach. Funding reflects priorities and only 0.5 per cent of all international aid in the past 20 years went towards preparedness and prevention activities. Moreover, only 1 per cent of development aid targeting the top 40 recipients of humanitarian assistance was spent on disaster risk reduction. The study by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Overseas Development Institute entitled *Dare to prepare: taking risk seriously* reveals that preparedness suffers from a fragmented aid structure that has not kept pace or adapted to the increasing demands for and requirements of more holistic risk management. There are many reasons for these poor levels of funding and they are not easy to overcome. Both donor and affected Governments tend to prioritize short-term actions that demonstrate quick results. The economic case, including cost-benefit analysis, for investment in disaster risk reduction is sometimes difficult to articulate compellingly and is challenging for policymakers to translate into action owing to the need for context specificity, long time frames for the realization of returns and the uncertainties inherent in managing disaster risks. Other explanations include strict legislation, competing funding requirements for response, and the separation of humanitarian and development aid budgets. Despite these limitations, there have been encouraging developments, such as the near doubling of the World Bank Group's disaster risk reduction portfolio between 2010 and 2013, currently standing at $3.8 billion. Lessons from such successes should be replicated more widely.

32. Funding is also poorly targeted. For instance, the Index for Risk Management indicates that South Sudan has the highest risk of humanitarian crisis, yet it remains forty-sixth in the list of official development aid per capita. Basing funding on an objective and shared risk assessment would help to prioritize funding flows and promote better coordination and burden-sharing among donors. Flexible longer-term financing would also enhance investments in risk management. It would encourage early action since programmes could scale up and adapt more easily and help to manage risk more effectively through preparedness and livelihood support that require longer commitments.

Way forward

33. To overcome these barriers and shift towards an anticipatory approach, risk management must be made an urgent priority by affected countries and donors, humanitarian and development actors and other stakeholders. Development and humanitarian actors must work together in joint initiatives to identify risks and implement holistic programmes that go beyond immediate response. Budgeting, planning, programming and coordination must provide a coherent strategic and operational framework to address the challenges of risk management.

C. Risk management in the post-2015 development agenda, the disaster risk reduction framework and the World Humanitarian Summit

34. The post-2015 development and disaster risk reduction frameworks, a new climate agreement and the World Humanitarian Summit present unique opportunities to bring about the required change at the global institutional level. Development cannot be sustainable if the risk of humanitarian crises is not taken into account and addressed as a joint priority. Tackling issues such as poverty, inequality and discrimination, climate change and environmental degradation, food and nutrition insecurity and malnutrition, protracted displacement, and conflict and fragility, including by protecting and promoting human rights and enhancing the resilience of communities and livelihoods, is crucial for both humanitarian and development action and meeting the needs of the most vulnerable.

35. Unequal progress against the Millennium Development Goals, chronic fragility and vulnerability, and recurrent and protracted crises highlight the need to dedicate resources in a more focused way to countries that are vulnerable to disasters and other humanitarian crises. Any new development framework must be inclusive of and beneficial to the most vulnerable and poorest people. The post-2015 development agenda presents a unique opportunity for the humanitarian community to advocate for sufficient priority and allocation of predictable, long-term resources to development programming that can reduce the risk of humanitarian crises and support sustainable recovery in post-crisis and transition settings. The impacts are interlinked: protracted humanitarian crises act as a barrier to sustainable development by undermining long-term recovery and resilience and, conversely, a lack of development can trigger a relapse and magnify the impact of crises on vulnerable people. Humanitarian assistance can be an investment in development, especially if it is positioned with medium- and long-term development goals in mind. Risk management can be a powerful instrument for development, bringing the means of progress to people in developing countries and wherever adverse shocks play a major role in pushing households below the poverty line.

36. The post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction is in a strong position to introduce the necessary changes to enhance current risk management practices in development planning and investment. The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, to be held in Sendai, Japan from 14 to 18 March 2015 will, among other objectives, adopt a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and identify modalities of cooperation for its implementation and periodic review. The General Assembly also strongly encourages promoting a complementary and coherent approach to the relationship between the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the post-2015 development agenda. Disaster risk reduction should be seen as a key instrument for achieving sustainable development by making sustainable development goals informed by disaster risk. Disaster risk reduction needs to be conceived and recognized as a guiding tool for supporting the successful implementation of not only the sustainable development goals but also the climate change agreement and the outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit. Consultations to date have consistently reinforced the need to secure interlinked and mutually supportive implementation. It is also important to develop an integrated system for measuring results that spans these global policy processes and maximizes the impact of disaster risk reduction.

37. The World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 will be an opportunity for a global consultation to help to build more inclusive and diverse humanitarian action and set a common humanitarian agenda for the future. One of the themes of the Summit is reducing vulnerability and managing risk. The discussions on this theme will seek to understand how humanitarian and development actors can work better together to manage the risks of crises. The consultations in the lead-up to the Summit will be informed by the post-2015 sustainable development and disaster risk reduction consultations and outcomes and will feed into those processes.

IV. Interoperability and strengthening operational partnerships

38. As humanitarian crises increase in scale and frequency, the international system is under growing strain to effectively respond. Meeting current and future humanitarian needs requires globally supported responses that transcend the remit of the international humanitarian system largely created through General Assembly resolution 46/182.[3] Humanitarian actors must be able to call on a larger, more diverse pool of international resources. An effective and sustained response may therefore lie in closer collaboration, communication and interaction with a range of actors, such as host Governments, regional organizations, community organizations, the private sector, diaspora groups and military actors, that may not necessarily seek to join the formal international system, in some cases responding on their own. In many contexts, these actors already make significant contributions to humanitarian responses based on their own and sometimes different interests, incentives and drivers.

A. Humanitarian needs at the centre

39. Ensuring that the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable are met in a timely, adequate and appropriate manner must remain at the centre of any humanitarian response, irrespective of which system or actor is responding to those needs, provided they are in the best position to do so on the basis of their comparative advantage. Often, actors outside the formal international humanitarian system have better capacity to meet the needs of affected people. The question is how international actors can work better with such groups, rather than creating disruptive or potentially less effective parallel systems.

B. Overview of different actors and comparative advantages

40. During and in the immediate aftermath of disasters, local actors and the affected community itself are the first responders, are most likely to have direct access to affected people, and remain in place to support recovery after the emergency phase has ended. In countries experiencing chronic vulnerability owing to recurrent disasters or prolonged crisis, civil society organizations are adept at

[3] It should be noted that the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are not members of the humanitarian system created through General Assembly resolution 46/182. They have their own independent structures and coordination mechanisms as part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

responding to local needs with culturally relevant approaches to support their communities and are usually integrated into national preparedness and response plans.

41. While local actors have always been an important part of a response, there is still much work to be done to fully acknowledge their role and ensure that the international response supports and enables the local one, rather than replacing it. However, national and local organizations are not always engaged as genuine partners but rather as intermediaries through which United Nations and international non-governmental organizations do their work and channel funding. In some situations, the arriving surge of international responders may result in local responders and their knowledge of the context being sidelined. In others, international actors do not always invest sufficiently in building the capacity of local operational partners.

42. It will be important for international humanitarian actors to increase their engagement with national and local governments and responders in support of their internal leadership structures, capacities and response mechanisms. Many Governments in the global South are increasingly taking a stronger lead when responding to disasters and the needs of their people. Governments in disaster-prone countries have systems, tools and frameworks in place for providing assistance. International actors need to effectively link up with these systems, building and strengthening national capacities and dovetailing their efforts with those of the Government. For instance, the increase in the number and capacity of national disaster management agencies has reinforced the need for the international system to work more closely with Governments to support local priorities and the development of response capacity. As an example of a best practice, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has partnered with various national disaster management agencies, including in Mozambique, the Philippines and Thailand, to train over 5,000 staff involved in camp coordination and camp management activities to develop response capacity and leadership in this particular sector.

43. Over the years, regional organizations have increased their capacities to prepare for and contribute to the operational response to major crises. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations established the Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management, known as the AHA Centre, in late 2011. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation developed a dedicated humanitarian funding mechanism and established the International Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs Department, while the African Union is in the process of adopting its Humanitarian Policy Framework. Regional organizations have an important role in mobilizing resources and responding rapidly. They can also strengthen interoperability by promoting compliance and coherence of preparedness and response efforts with international standards across multiple countries.

44. Local, national and international private sector actors are increasingly engaged in humanitarian responses as suppliers, deliverers and funders. Although mainly guided by the potential for business and profits, the private sector often functions as an innovator of the technological capacity that can be used to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian response, in particular in the areas of telecommunications, early warning systems and beneficiary feedback mechanisms. Businesses are usually on the ground among communities before the arrival of

international aid agencies and often possess efficient supply chains, established distribution channels, logistical capacity and quick access to funds and resources. For example, after Typhoon Haiyan struck the Philippines, the Philippine Disaster Recovery Foundation coordinated the activities of the private companies engaged in response. The Foundation set up five area clusters (education; early recovery; environment, including fisheries; shelter and water sanitation; and infrastructure and health) for companies that were organizing responses on the ground. Through coordinated joint projects such as a mobile fundraising drive and together with partners, these companies helped to re-establish convenience stores and supply chains.

45. Diaspora communities have direct connections with affected people and often have an understanding of the overall situation and needs at the household level. They can provide person-to-person support outside of established humanitarian channels, which can be a cost-efficient way of reaching affected people, especially if such unconditional cash transfers bypass institutional intermediaries who charge overhead and transfer fees are waived in the aftermath of major disasters. Precise financial tracking information from diaspora communities is difficult to collect, but the World Bank estimated that migrant workers from developing countries sent $414 billion in recorded remittances back to their countries of origin in 2013, an increase of 6.3 per cent over the previous year. By 2016, this amount is projected to rise to $540 billion. Remittances make a significant difference to vulnerable, disaster-affected people by helping them to supplement livelihoods and absorb shocks such as disasters. Findings from the Haiyan response show that support sent from family members abroad helped to protect affected people from hunger. Those receiving remittances after the typhoon were almost five times more likely to be food secure than other households.

46. In many countries, the military and civil defence forces are mandated to provide the first line of national response, while foreign militaries also respond bilaterally upon the request of the affected Government when disasters overwhelm national capacity. Benefiting from effective command and control systems and logistical capacity, militaries can rapidly mobilize and deploy crucial assets and unique expertise to response operations and help to save lives and alleviate suffering. Different goals, motivating factors, guiding principles, organizational cultures and ways of working can, however, present challenges for effective interaction and coordination between military and humanitarian/civilian actors. These challenges can be navigated by using and closely adhering to well-established guidelines on the use of military and civil defence assets in support of disaster relief and humanitarian activities, which can help to ensure effective response and enable humanitarian and military actors to pursue common objectives when appropriate. In the Haiyan response, 22 Member States deployed foreign military assets. Effective humanitarian civil-military coordination was crucial in managing the complexities and operational challenges posed by the geographic spread and the large-scale destruction of infrastructure. Important elements of the successful coordination of the response were open communication channels and information-sharing between humanitarian and military actors, their co-location and the added value of a national civil-military liaison officer.

C. Implications for the way forward

47. Recent disasters have brought actors together at the country and regional levels, but such collaboration often remains inconsistent and unsystematic and lacks shared standard operating procedures. Many of these actors already have in place, or seek to develop, their own systems and processes for responding to humanitarian emergencies. International humanitarian agencies will remain as important as ever, but their role may shift towards complementing this emerging external capacity, brokering new partnerships and encouraging those best positioned to deliver to do so. Strengthening synergies and relationships with these actors is essential in fulfilling the humanitarian imperative and effectively meeting needs both now and in the future.

48. Capitalizing on these diverse approaches to better meet humanitarian needs requires recognition of and engagement with these actors and systems. Better understanding of each actor's comparative advantages, unique expertise and contribution is needed to match supply with needs in specific contexts and ensure complementarity. This requires a deeper understanding of which actors are best positioned to respond to what, when and how. It is also important to consider their motivations, since each largely abides by its own rules, philosophies and interests when responding. Identifying the actors' key motivators and capacities will help to make these dynamics and interaction more predictable and organized. It is thus necessary to identify common ground, build arrangements for interaction and possibly develop standards for cooperation towards the overall goal of ensuring that growing humanitarian needs are met more effectively.

V. Progress in strengthening humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters

49. During the reporting period, progress was made in strengthening the effectiveness and coordination of activities to address gaps related to displacement and protection as well as logistics and provision of in-kind relief aid in the context of natural disasters.

A. Displacement and protection in situations of natural disasters

50. Disasters have a devastating impact in particular on the poor and other marginalized groups, who are often left increasingly vulnerable to such events in the future. Disasters destroy homes and cause displacement, which weakens or destroys social networks and increases the risk of exposure of individuals and groups to violations of their rights, including marginalization resulting from discrimination and gender inequality as well as sexual and gender-based violence, often exacerbating pre-existing vulnerabilities and patterns of discrimination. Disasters disrupt education, livelihoods and the delivery of health-care and other services and pose considerable challenges to the response capacity of national and local authorities.

51. People affected by disasters remain protected under international human rights law. This also includes protection from arbitrary and secondary displacement. States have a duty to protect human rights, including rights related to water, food, health,

education and housing and property restitution. States also have responsibility for ensuring access to justice, especially if disrupted following a disaster, and for taking actions that allow and facilitate humanitarian access to people in need of assistance and protection.

52. The distinct and separate needs and vulnerabilities of those affected by natural disasters need to be effectively identified and addressed. Adequate gender and age analysis involves sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data and direct consultations with women, girls, boys and men of all ages. Such consultations assess their needs, vulnerabilities and capacities, the form of assistance and protection they need and the role they can play in programming. This is imperative to inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of response and ensure its effectiveness and quality.

53. Although there is increasing recognition of the need to prevent and respond to all forms of violence and abuse, in particular sexual and gender-based violence in the context of disaster response, these measures need to be better integrated into preparedness and contingency planning. In the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan, massive displacement into overcrowded evacuation centres offered limited security and privacy and raised risks to the safety and well-being of women, men and children, including sexual and gender-based violence. To address this, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in collaboration with the rapid response team for the gender-based violence area of responsibility, helped to train and deploy nearly 100 women police officers from the Women and Child Protection Desk of the national police to patrol evacuation centres in Tacloban. This gender-sensitive approach helped to prevent gender-based violence and created capacity for future emergencies.

54. In the aftermath of a disaster, it is essential to ensure that reconstruction plans support livelihoods and the building of durable housing and help to secure land tenure, in particular for poor rural women. Recovering from major disasters is a long process. Four years after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, which claimed over 217,000 lives and displaced more than 2.1 million people, humanitarian and development partners are still supporting internally displaced persons by providing transitional shelter, rental grants and subsidies and income-generating opportunities, pending the consolidation of more durable solutions. In the Philippines, while it may be necessary to relocate people living in coastal high-risk areas, it is essential to ensure that their rights are respected, protected and fulfilled when taking such decisions and implementing them, in compliance with international human rights law, standards and related guidance, such as the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters.

55. Information management systems can facilitate protection and other services for displaced persons. In the Philippines, as in most major emergencies, the IOM displacement tracking matrix was activated within the camp coordination and camp management cluster as a service to all clusters to gather baseline information, monitor the locations and multisectoral needs of displaced communities and flag for action urgent needs and priorities. For instance, the matrix identified the precise locations of evacuation centres with unaccompanied minors and helped to mobilize the child protection cluster for immediate response. It also continues to facilitate the

transition to recovery in Haiti by providing national counterparts with the means to link large-scale registration to individual housing solutions.

56. The development of national policies on disaster-induced internal displacement and durable solutions helps to ensure a more predictable preparedness and response in line with international standards. In line with the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, countries such as Afghanistan, Kenya, Nepal, Peru and Uganda have developed national policies that clarify responsibilities and outline a comprehensive approach to the prevention of and response to displacement. Greater consideration could also be given by Member States and the United Nations to the development of guidance on the relocation of people from disaster-prone areas.

57. In 2013, the Nansen Initiative, led by Norway and Switzerland, held two intergovernmental regional consultations, in the Pacific and Central America, on the protection needs of people displaced across international borders in the context of disasters, including those linked to climate change. Initial findings confirm the critical importance of the issue, which manifests differently in each region. The consultations and research emphasized the importance of incorporating human mobility issues within disaster risk management, development and climate change adaption measures to avoid and minimize displacement when possible. Temporary protection measures, such as allowing those who cross borders owing to sudden-onset disasters to receive visas or stay on humanitarian grounds, were identified as possible protection mechanisms to be developed and harmonized. To address the issue comprehensively, identified opportunities for addressing protection gaps within ongoing policy and planning processes, such as the climate change negotiations and the post-2015 disaster risk reduction and development frameworks, must be seized. Additional regional consultations and accompanying civil society meetings will lead to a global meeting on a protection agenda in 2015, which will propose a common set of principles and an action plan on cross-border mobility in the context of disasters and the effect of climate change.

B. Logistics

58. During the reporting period, efforts continued to enhance the effectiveness of logistics and the coordination and distribution of in-kind relief aid. These efforts were aimed at developing preparedness and response capacities, tackling identified gaps and bottlenecks, and strengthening partnerships and interoperability required to address increasing risks and needs.

59. Following the regional workshops held in 2012 in the Dominican Republic and Thailand, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the World Customs Organization continued their collaboration in 2013 with a seminar for Central Asia hosted by the Government of Kazakhstan on customs facilitation during relief operations. The seminar brought together representatives from national disaster management authorities, customs services and Red Cross and Red Crescent societies to discuss recurrent challenges, compare national legislations and identify solutions to expedite the importation of relief consignments in the aftermath of disasters. Additional workshops are planned for Africa and the Middle East. In addition, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs initiated discussions with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to implement a customs

facilitation module in its Automated System for Customs Data programme implemented in over 100 countries.

60. The practical outcome of such discussions was demonstrated during the response to Typhoon Haiyan, where a "one-stop shop" for customs was quickly set up by the national authorities in the airport of Cebu. This setup, together with private sector staff seconded to the logistics cluster, helped to address customs issues and expedited and simplified the arrival procedures for incoming relief workers and consignments.

61. In 2013, Deutsche Post DHL continued to roll out, together with UNDP, the "Get airports ready for disasters" capacity-building programme for disaster-prone countries. The programme involves DHL aviation experts coaching managers of middle-sized airports and staff of national disaster management agencies on how to prepare for the logistic challenges posed by disasters. As at January 2014, more than 300 representatives from 21 airports had participated in the programme's workshops.

62. To establish a better global overview of relief items coming into a disaster-affected country, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, with support from Deutsche Post DHL, launched LogIK, a new database to track cross-border movements of relief consignments. This system complements the financial information of the Financial Tracking Service and the in-country tracking system of the logistics cluster. It was deployed for the first time during the response to Typhoon Haiyan. Within three weeks, more than 140 consignments from 79 organizations were recorded, which provided valuable information for the response and confirmed the need for this kind of reporting.

63. The strategic plan on unsolicited in-kind donations and other inappropriate humanitarian goods commissioned by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs was launched in 2013 and the full implementation of its recommendations, such as the creation of a reference entity for in-kind contributions, more systematic information-sharing and the promotion of item standardization, will be initiated in 2014. In line with the recommendations, the amount of unsolicited and inappropriate consignments that reached the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan remained relatively small following the swift issuance of a "Guide to Giving" and timely strategic advocacy.

VI. Recommendations

64. Member States, the United Nations, humanitarian and development organizations and other stakeholders are urged to prioritize risk management and shift towards an anticipatory approach to humanitarian crises in order to prevent and reduce human suffering and economic losses.

65. Humanitarian and development organizations are urged to take concrete steps to enhance joint analysis, planning and programming in risk management and to strengthen the capacity of Member States, in particular those most vulnerable to natural hazards, to manage the risks of crises.

66. Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations are urged to continue to operationalize the resilience agenda, in

particular in locations of high risk and low capacity and recurring and protracted crisis.

67. The United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations are encouraged to agree on a common understanding of underlying risks, clarify roles and responsibilities according to respective mandates and establish joint objectives and programmes to strengthen coordination and coherence among short-, medium- and long-term activities.

68. Member States, the United Nations, humanitarian and development organizations, the private sector and civil society are urged to identify and address the different and specific needs and vulnerabilities of women, girls, boys and men in the context of disasters, including by ensuring that a gender perspective is integrated into all aspects of risk management and that vulnerable groups, especially women and children, participate in the assessment, development and implementation of risk management strategies.

69. Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations are urged to identify ways to expand, enhance and transform the current financing architecture to better provide coherent, predictable and flexible longer-term funding for risk management in multi-year strategies, in particular preparedness, on the basis of a global assessment of risk, allowing for better prioritization of resources where the risk is greatest.

70. Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations are urged to ensure a more comprehensive, coherent, systematic and people-centred approach to managing risks, including through the new global frameworks being developed for sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and climate change and through the outcome of the World Humanitarian Summit.

71. The United Nations is encouraged to engage in consultations with all relevant stakeholders and to review best practice and possible steps to integrate risk management into all stages of humanitarian action and to report back to Member States on progress made.

72. The United Nations, Member States and humanitarian organizations are encouraged to further research how to facilitate interoperability among key actors in a disaster setting.

73. Member States are encouraged to coordinate with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs early in a disaster response to ensure predictable and needs-based deployment of foreign military assets and personnel supporting humanitarian assistance.

74. Member States, the United Nations and humanitarian and development organizations are urged to address displacement and its impact on the poor and marginalized in disaster risk management efforts and strengthen the resilience of people at risk to prevent protracted displacement.

75. Member States, supported by the United Nations, are encouraged to develop national policies on internal displacement that address disaster-induced displacement, detail responsibilities and measures to minimize the impact of disasters, protect and assist internally displaced persons following disasters, and ensure durable solutions.

76. Member States are encouraged to further strengthen the role and effectiveness of customs administrations in disaster preparedness and response, including through the implementation of appropriate customs facilitation measures on the basis of international conventions and the Model Agreement between the United Nations and a State/Government.

77. Member States are encouraged to continue to reduce and better channel unsolicited in-kind donations and other inappropriate relief goods, including by implementing the strategic plan of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on unsolicited in-kind donations and other inappropriate humanitarian goods.

78. Member States, the private sector and humanitarian organizations are encouraged to provide information about the relief consignments that they intend to dispatch following disasters in order to contribute to an enhanced global overview of incoming relief items to affected countries.